

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Compucon Corp

Enterprise Minnesota

#### Value Stream Mapping Leads the Way to Major Process Improvement at Compucon Corporation

##### Client Profile:

Compucon Corporation designs, tests, and manufactures custom electronic controls for low-volume Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs). Its controls are found in a wide variety of electronic monitoring and control applications. The company's products are used in anything from firefighting equipment as a control for foam-spray, to medical and food products to measure gas permeation in packaging materials. Compucon works closely with its parent company SJE Rhombus and employs 23 people at its facility in New Hope, Minnesota.

##### Situation:

Compucon works with low-volume OEMs primarily, and customer satisfaction is a high priority. Compucon wanted to maintain a high-level of satisfaction, reduce waste internally, and reduce costs overall. Compucon was looking to make similar changes at their New Hope facility that SJE Rhombus as a whole made working through Enterprise Minnesota, a NIST MEP network affiliate.

##### Solution:

Enterprise Minnesota worked with Compucon on a Value Stream Mapping (VSM) project at their New Hope facility. A VSM looks at how the flow of work impacts the total costs, and helps develop methods to improve processes. Compucon drew together a team that included members from different parts of the company and developed goals that focused on being better, faster, and less expensive. Compucon found wastes in time and overproduction. The company had its sub-assembly area staged, which was not conducive to flow. It had longer lead times and larger batches than they should have. Workers were 'chasing' during production, bringing product to an assembler and constantly retrieving tools. Compucon and Enterprise Minnesota found through the VSM that there were four modules to focus on for improvement. In one module they developed a cart system for production. A cart includes all documentation, parts, and tools for assembly. In a redefined material handler role, a worker moves the cart as one total component of the production process. As a result of Enterprise Minnesota's assistance, the company identified wastes in its processes and eliminated non-value added processes, materials, and activities.

##### Results:

- \* Reduced lead time from 40 days to 9 days.

Projected savings:

- \* Setup time 25 percent.
- \* Run time 50 percent.
- \* Reduced costs by 7 to 9 percent.

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**Testimonial:**

"This was a global eye opening to everyone that we can always do better. It's been well received and now we get a lot of ideas generated."

Tim Johnson, Production Manager